



# Taste and See...

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## Two-Tone Revival

***Rev. Canon Gene Packwood***

Recently, during Prayer and Praise at St Mary's, we were praying and talking about revival. As we listened for words from the Lord, the words "two-tone" came to my mind and I thought of a classic, shiny, car with white-walled tires and a two-tone paint job. One of the men suggested a 1957 Chevrolet. Perfect! A 1957 Chevrolet Bel Air two-door hard-top. Being Anglican, I chose a red and white colour scheme: red for the church season of Pente-

cost and Holy Spirit fire, and white for Easter and resurrection Power.

What, other than shades of Easter and Pentecost, might an image of a two-tone red and white 1957 Chevrolet Bel Air have to do with revival? What, if anything, could the Lord be saying prophetically through it? Here are a few possibilities.

1957 Chevrolet Bel Airs are attractive — well, to me anyway. So is revival. Revivals draw people. They fill churches. People experience God's beauty and glory. They can't get enough of it. On the

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## REVIVAL, continued

other hand, there is also a warning in this image about not trivializing revival by allowing ourselves to be mesmerized, as if it were nothing but a bright shiny new toy. Although revival can be bright and attractive, it has a serious purpose — to reboot the church and bring people to saving faith. I'm earnestly praying for it and have been ever since my 2010-13 stint on The Anglican Church of Canada's Council of General Synod. That bitter-sweet experience of the church's workings and governance led me to the conclusion that revival is our only hope.

1957 Chevrolet Bel Airs are streamlined. They were designed to move and to carry people from place to place in some style. Revival is like God streamlining his church so it will move through resistance more smoothly, carrying people to where he wants them to go. Historical revivals have always encouraged and released significant missionary efforts.

1957 Chevrolet Bel Airs are powerful and can go fast. Revival can push you back in your seat. Some people are frightened by how fast revivals get people moving. Revivals are exciting. The Winds of God can whip through your hair. When God moves in revival, people experience God's power personally.

1957 Chevrolet Bel Airs have steering wheels, gas and brake pedals. Sometimes, when revival happens, some Church people

and leaders want to take the wheel and steer it away from what they see as danger. Others just want to keep the gas pedal flat to the floor. Still others, particularly leaders, historically it seems, want to stomp on the brakes. For some reason, God in his mercy, gives us some control. The trick is to not stifle things, but to allow the Lord to do the driving and to take us where he wants to take us.

1957 Chevrolet Bel Airs have big trunks. We can let a lot of baggage accumulate in there. Just as the word "repent" is the first word of the Gospel (Mk1.15), to confess all known sin was the first requirement Evan Roberts set in the Welsh Revival of 1904. Not only that, but 1957 Chevrolet Bel Airs come with lots of nice shiny chrome, in which you can see your reflection. This helps with the revival self-examination which leads to repentance.

1957 Chevrolet Bel Airs need to be properly maintained. Every now and then, the gas tank must be filled. The oil (anointing?) needs to be changed. They need to be washed and waxed to protect the finish and keep it shiny. The windows need to be defrosted and kept clean and clear so we can see where God wants us to go and avoid running anybody over. Some focused worship and prayer is needed.

1957 Chevrolet Bel Airs run on pneumatic tires — filled with air or *pneuma* which is the Greek for "wind," as in *hagia* (Holy) *pneuma* (Spirit). Have you ever tried to drive a car with one or

more flat tires? You might be able to reach your destination, but your car is hard to steer, your speed is drastically reduced, you will destroy the tire and, eventually, the rim. Holy Spirit wind in our tires gives us traction and makes us go, smoothly and safely.

1957 Chevrolet Bel Airs are classic cars. Revivals are nothing new. They are Spirit-filled classic events. Every now and then, God's Church needs a fresh Show & Shine. From Pentecost through the Reformation and the various Great Awakenings and Revivals in the last few hundred years, God has visited his people in bright and shiny ways.

By the way, as I write, a 1957 Chevrolet Bel Air like the one pictured above is for sale, for \$95,000 US. A pearl of great price!

Okay. This, you might think, is stretching the whole "two-tone" thing a bit thin. Gene's advanced years have rusted his side-panels, loosened some screws, and caused his hubcaps to rattle. Perhaps something he ate led to vain, fevered, overwrought, two-tone imaginings. Even so, revival is real. Look up Pastor Bill McLeod of Saskatoon on YouTube. Check out Acts News Network's DVD, *From the River to the Ends of the Earth*. All in all, two-tone and shiny or not, revival is real and worth praying for.

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**REDISCOVERING THE  
HOLY SPIRIT'S  
REFRESHING PRESENCE  
IN OUR LIVES  
AND IN THE CHURCH**

## From the Editor

*Alison Stortz*

There's a story about a Grinch who tried to steal an important holiday, but even without all the trappings, "It came. It came just the same." None of our celebrations have been as usual this year. As one person put it, "This is the Lentiest Lent I've ever Lented." But then Easter came, just the same. The disciples didn't celebrate that first Easter by nibbling the ears off their chocolate bunnies. They were frightened, and locked away in an upper room. Sound familiar? At Pentecost, they were gathered in Jerusalem, having been told to "stay" and "wait." Sound familiar? It seems our recent experiences have been more authentic, precisely because they have been so unusual.

One thing COVID-19 has done for us is shine a light on our choices – good, and not so good – and remind us that everything is a choice, including following Jesus.

Humanity has been brought to its knees by something we can't even see. But isn't "on our knees" the best position to be in? COVID-19 threatens more than just our "trappings," it threatens our livelihoods, even our lives. But the promises of God are real, and eternal. Jesus promised to never leave us, and the Holy Spirit is here with us, just as He promised. He came, just the same.

I hope that you will find in this issue some comfort and encouragement in these difficult times. I look forward to hearing from you.

*Alison ☺*

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## Brand Loyalty

**Rev. Perry Cooper**

While I was growing up in rural Newfoundland it was very common for individuals to be loyal to a particular brand or product. For example, my father was a Chrysler man, while his cousin across the road was a loyal Ford owner. Being serious tea drinkers, it was very important for Newfoundlanders to carry the proper brand of tea; in my home it was King Cole, whereas in other homes folks were just as likely to be die-hard Red Rose or Tetley tea drinkers. When it came to ordering gifts for Christmas, you had a choice between the Sears or Eaton's catalogues - many households preferred one over the other. I can't remember anyone actually giving a reason for their preference of one brand over another. It could simply be that if you had a positive experience with a particular product or brand, why would you risk change?

The world today is very different from the one of my youth. For example, if a person is getting ready to purchase a vehicle, they

are likely to spend a significant amount of time reviewing online ratings of various vehicle makes and models, as well as looking for the best deal. If you look at today's cell phone market, there are dozens of carriers offering a wide variety of products and services. Competition is stiff, and people shop around.

During this time of physical distancing caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, many people have experienced loneliness, if not outright isolation. Many people are scared and confused about what the future holds, and looking for something meaningful to hold onto. Not that long ago, in a time of crisis, most people in our nation would turn to the church for answers. You might say that Canadians were "brand loyal" to Christianity; not so much anymore.

People have increasingly been going online and to social media for encouragement and inspiration. In the past few months I

have seen an online proliferation of inspirational songs and religious quotes and services. In my opinion, this is a golden opportunity for the church of Jesus Christ to make a fresh impact in our country and our world. How will we use this time?

In this global crisis, millions of people are searching for truth and meaning, a genuine experience with a Greater Power who can bring peace and hope. With countless expressions of religious, self-help and New Age thought circulating about the internet, there is a lot to choose from. So what makes Christianity unique? What separates it from everything else?

Above all, we serve a Saviour who has conquered death with his life. This message is unique and without equal. Christ not only asks us to follow him, he empowers us to do so: "With great power the apostles continued to testify to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. And God's grace was so powerfully at work in them all" (Acts 4:33). The cry of the people in Jesus' time is the same cry today: What shall we do to be saved? The answer is also the same: "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The promise is for you and your children and

*(Continued on page 5)*





## Experiencing the Holy Spirit: a book review

*Rev. David Coffin*

I was recently given a copy of Andrew Murray's book, Experiencing the Holy Spirit (Whitaker House, 2000). This book may be familiar to some, but it was a new read for me and one I really enjoyed. As the day and season of Pentecost approaches, I thought it might be good to review the book and encourage others to consider adding it to their library. As I write this we are still under lockdown — a great time to read! If it is not on your shelf, you can order a copy through Amazon, or get it as an ebook.

In the introduction, it says, "From the scriptures Andrew Murray discusses the importance and power of the Holy Spirit in the Christian life." I believe it is only by referencing the Scriptures that we can fully explore the role of the Holy Spirit in the life of believers. Murray's use of the Word is generous and helpful in understanding that, "the Spirit is given to reveal Christ, and every fully

accepted revelation of Christ gives the Spirit room to dwell and work within us."

Some of the topics covered in the book are: discovering God's will for our lives, claiming our inheritance in Christ, and strengthening our spiritual walk. Another topic Murray covers in the book is about receiving and attracting God's favor and blessings. He poses these questions: Can the full blessing of Pentecost be still further increased? Can anything that is full become even *fuller*?

Murray begins his discussion of these questions with two very familiar passages from John: "He who believes in me shall never thirst," (6:35) and, "He who believes in me... out of his heart will flow rivers of living water" (7:38). Murray reminds us of God's promise that we will never thirst. In addition, as we trust and grow in Christ, practising obedience to His commands, we will not only

have our own thirst satisfied but those streams will flow out to others, blessing them in turn. Obedience, Murray says, means holding fast to what we have, persevering in self-denial and finally letting Jesus be all in all. I do have to say this was my favorite chapter in the book, offering insights I hadn't considered before.

If you are new to the faith, or looking for refreshment and encouragement to live a life fully in the Spirit, this is a great book to read and study as an individual or group. Again, the use of Scripture is generous and well thought out, leaving the reader encouraged. Even if you have read it before, I would encourage you to pick it up and be blessed!

*Rev. David Coffin, an ARM board member, lives in Bishop's Falls, NL.*

### LOYALTY, continued

for all who are far off — for all whom the Lord our God will call" (Acts 2:38-39).

I believe that the Christian hope is the only hope. I believe the message we can offer this world to bring healing, help and salvation comes from the gospel of Jesus Christ, and the only authentic, life-changing power is found in the indwelling presence of the

Holy Spirit: "And if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies because of his Spirit who lives in you" (Rom 8:11).

During this season of quarantine and self-care, I would encourage you to study the Scriptures, and to be nourished by them. Ask the

Holy Spirit to speak to you and empower you as you meditate on the Word. And then pray that others will be encouraged to seek the Lord their Saviour, through the Holy Spirit living and working in you. May God richly bless you as you remain steadfast in your faith.

*Rev. Perry Cooper is the Archdeacon of Chatham in Miramichi, NB.*

# Rest in God: Finding Peace during the Pandemic \_\_\_\_\_

*Dianne Trinder*

There is certainly no shortage of things to read on the internet. So there is a battle going on inside of me every day, between wanting to know the latest news (maybe even the latest conspiracy theory), and wanting to spend time with Jesus! If I'm not careful, anxiety can fix my attention on what the news is saying, and not on what God is saying to me in His Word.

If I truly desire to get to know the author of my faith better, then the best way (really the only way) is to rest in HIM!

God promised this rest in Hebrews 4:1-12, which begins, "God's promise of enjoying his rest still stands." Will I take advantage of this promise, every day and all day? Can He give me that rest, even as I am bombarded with everything going on in our world today?

So how do I respond to this inner conflict? Pursue the secret place and fight for it (Psalm 91). The "secret place" refers to intimacy with God, the place where I can enjoy and build up my personal relationship with the Father. As William Dupley explains in the introduction to his book, The Secret Place, "Our Heavenly Father talks about a place called the secret place. It is a promise of pro-

tection, safety and communion with God. It is the place where Abraham met God and spoke to him as one man speaks to another. It is the place where every individual can meet God face to face."

If I don't deliberately make time to spend with God, more than likely it won't happen. In the Passion Translation we read in Hebrews 4:11, "So then we must give our all and be eager to experience this faith-rest life, so that no one

encounter to bring me closer to Jesus. I'm learning to lean into it and pay attention. The Holy Spirit is speaking to me. I go to bed now expecting He will speak to me in a dream, or impress on me something He wants me to do.

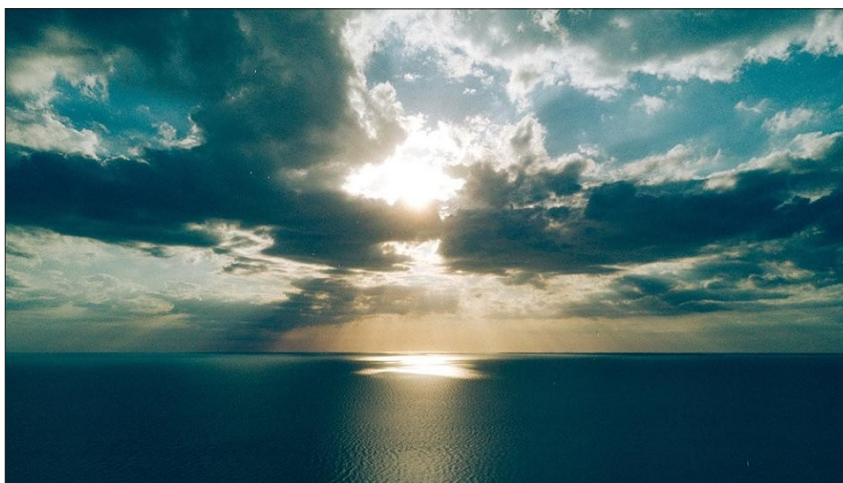
Very recently, I woke up with an incredible sense of His peace; I have never felt anything quite like that. A few hours later, I knew it was what I needed as my day unfolded: I was able to be gracious and not take offence. I am so thankful to the Lord that I felt His peace the entire day!

Lastly, if you don't journal, I would encourage you to consider starting. When I go through a dry period, I can go back to my journal and reflect on what God has been saying to me. I

want to keep my eyes on Jesus more than on the storm or, in our case, on this pandemic!

Oh Lord Jesus, I pray that each of us will desire more and more of Your Holy Spirit as we navigate the days ahead.

*Dianne Trinder, an ARM board member, attends Trinity Anglican Church in Sarnia, ON.*



falls short by following the same pattern of doubt and unbelief."

Getting to that place of rest can be difficult, but it is truly the only place where we will receive His peace and freedom. I'm learning to speak out loud, telling the evil one to get lost! Listening to praise music has also helped me get into a posture of prayer, reflection and rest in Him.

As I rest in Him, I expect each

# From the ARM Chair

**Rev. Canon Gene Packwood**

The Church of England offers several apps for daily, Spirit-filled encouragement. As one of the prayers in the *Time to Pray* app says,

*Christ yesterday and today,  
the beginning and the end,  
Alpha and Omega,  
all time belongs to you,  
and all ages;  
to you be glory and power  
through every age and for ever.*

Jesus hasn't changed. All time and all ages. COVID-19 or not.

As I write, early in May in Saskatchewan, we are cautiously taking some tentative steps into the open again. It feels good. I feel like The LORD has hit a divine reset button for us. We're going through a bit of a reboot. Not sure what Church Version 20.21 is going to look like, but of this I am sure — The Lamb wins!

This year, we will likely have a stay-at-home Pentecost — a bit like the apostles experienced when the Risen Jesus ordered them to stay in Jerusalem to wait for the promise of the Father (Acts 1:4). We've been *ordered* to stay home and wait, too.

Wait for what? I wonder what promise the Father has for us this time. For the apostles, it would be baptism with the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:5, 2:1-4). St Luke writes, "when the day of Pentecost arrived, they were all together in one place." (Acts 2:1)

Not likely we'll be allowed to be all together in one place this year. We might feel locked down domestically, geographically and spiritually, but the Father is not. So what could our promise be? Renewal? Revival? More waiting? Deeper wilderness? Loss of comfort and security?

How shall we respond as Spirit-filled folk? Beth and Matt Redman got it right in the song they composed after 9/11. "*Blessed be Your Name*," they wrote,  
*in the land that is plentiful  
Where Your streams of abundance flow  
Blessed be Your name  
And blessed be Your name  
when I'm found in the desert place  
Though I walk through the wilderness  
Blessed be Your name.*  
(©2002 Thankyou Music)

Blessed be The Name of the LORD! Alleluia! Amen!

Please continue to pray for those who are sick and those still at risk, for those looking after them and for anxious separated families, for those grieving the death of loved ones, for those who have lost jobs and businesses, and for an end to the pandemic.

May The LORD's good promises be fulfilled in all of our lives.

Love in Jesus,  
*Gene+*

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Yukon	Rt. Rv. Lesley Wheeler-Dame

\* Metropolitan of the Ecclesiastical Province

# Following the Holy Spirit

**Andrew Read**

Of course, I'm a Christian, I was born in England in 1956, what else would I be?

After 35 years of being a born-in-England Christian, of not needing church, of not listening for the voice of God, of only acknowledging God in times of extreme need with those "Help me" prayers, circumstances beyond my control brought my life to a place where, "I sought the Lord, and he answered me, and delivered me from all my fears" (Ps 34:4 NRSV).

Needing to find a church, I sought the comfort of the vaguely familiar, yet tainted, church of my childhood, the Anglican Church. I quickly learned when to stand, sit, and kneel (all the Anglican Aerobics), and what to say. I became a sidesman, a lector, a eucharistic assistant, a vestry member, overhead projector operator, a 10% tither, and I helped found and lead the Men's Ministry; all in an effort to earn more points with God so that He would love me more.

I first encountered the Holy Spirit at my Cursillo weekend in November 1994. The theme was "Dwell in my love," from John 15:10. There, as I discovered the Father's heart and His unconditional love for me, I responded to the Holy Spirit's prompting and made Jesus my Lord and Saviour. I wasn't really sure what had happened in that moment, but I knew

that my life had changed forever. I was a new creation. Today, I know this was what Jesus and the Apostles describe as the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

For a while I thought of this as being like Saul's experience on the Damascus Road, but as I look back, I am reminded of the time Jesus healed ten lepers, recounted in Luke 17. Only one of them recognised who had touched him and returned. I can now see I had been one of the other 9 most of my life. God had touched me many times before, but I failed to recognise Him and kept on walking. This time was different. Like the Samaritan leper, I understood who had touched me, I had turned around, repented, and been transformed. And I will be eternally grateful.

A couple of years later, a clergyman friend with a prophetic gifting asked me whether I had a Life Scripture. I didn't even know what that was, but I sought the Holy Spirit's counsel and found I was repeatedly drawn to 2 Corinthians 5:11 - 6:2. It was my story. Within that passage, verse 20 stood out: "we are ambassadors for Christ." This verse has focused me every day since. I am on the mission of representing Jesus Christ to the world, so that the world may be reconciled to the Father.

As I began to read the Bible more consistently and with more pas-

sion, I invited the Holy Spirit to increase my understanding. One of the first things he did was reveal to me the supremacy of the Great Commission, Jesus' last words to His followers before His Ascension: "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you" (Matt 28:19-20 NRSV). I had joined Jesus' harvest team.

This Christ-centred, Holy Spirit-led life had me on the mission, learning to love what God loves and share that with the world. Being on the mission has involved living life on the edge, where I can't succeed in my own strength but need to rely on Holy Spirit empowerment. God has provided abundantly. "Seek first the Kingdom of God" (Matt 6:33 NRSV) has meant allowing the Holy Spirit to lead my life, aligning my will and desires to His. I tried earning my salvation, and learned that it doesn't work.

Over the past ten years, God has called my wife Glenda and myself, first, to get ready. He said, "become debt-free," so I can use you better. Down-sizing from our acreage in the foothills of Alberta to a house in town got rid of the mortgage, which allowed us to hear God's voice. He was asking

*(Continued on page 9)*



# The Holy Spirit in the Prayer Books, Part 16

*Rev. Canon Gene Packwood*

Jesus gives the Spirit without measure, said John the Baptist (John 3:34). Accordingly, on the Day of Pentecost the Holy Spirit

came with the sound of a mighty rushing wind from heaven, which filled the house, and appeared like divided tongues of fire. The people were filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak in other tongues (Acts 2:1-4). We will celebrate that event in worship on Sunday, May 31, this year.

That was only the beginning. Later

in Acts there was awe and there were wonders and signs (2:43), and the Holy Spirit shook the place they were in again and caused them to speak the word of God with boldness (4:31). He comforted them (9:31), fell on them (10:4, 11:15), sent them hither and yon (13:4), filled them with joy (13:52) and they prophesied (19:6). Believers must have reacted with joyful, if somewhat startled and bemused, wonder. Others, we read, were bewildered, amazed, astonished, perplexed, skeptical, angry, vengeful

*(Continued on page 10)*



## HOLY SPIRIT, continued

us to “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations.” The call came to Youth with a Mission, where we attended a Discipleship Training School. Following the Holy Spirit’s promptings, we left the comfort of our jobs and salaries, we further down-sized to a condo apartment, and we began a journey that took us through a 12-week lecture phase and 8-week outreach to Hanoi, Vietnam. We then served with YWAM, staffing Discipleship Training Schools and leading teams into Vietnam for a bit more than 3 years.

Vietnam is an exciting area for mission. Most of the Christians we meet and work with are young, passionate, first-generation believers who have turned away from atheistic communism or animistic

Buddhism, and ancestor worship. This often means they have had to leave their families; some are even persecuted by them. These believers are passionate about reading the Bible, they live immersed in prayer and believe that God can do all things; they are witnesses to signs and wonders, and many miracles, as they share God’s love while operating in the power of the Holy Spirit. We are waiting upon the Lord to provide an opportunity to return.

Throughout my Christian journey, God has exposed me to a lot of variety. I have witnessed and become familiar with all the spiritual gifts that Paul mentions in 1 Corinthians 12 and 14, and chapter 13 is the meat that Paul puts in that sandwich: “the greatest of

these is love.” When Jesus was asked what the Greatest Commandment in the Law is, his reply included two. It was simple, but not easy: Love God, Love Others (Deut 6:4-5, Lev 19:17-18). We are called to a life of sacrifice: to put God first, then others, and lastly ourselves.

As we go about our daily lives, we need to remember that we have resurrection power living within us, in the form of the Holy Spirit, to allow us to participate in reconciling the world to God and reaching all the nations, so that Jesus can come back.

*Andrew Read attends St. Peter’s Anglican Church in Okotoks, AB.*

and envious. What there wasn't, was indifference. This was a spectacular series of events which stirred people to the core and launched the Church.

These are the Collects for Pentecost Sunday:

*GOD, who as at this time didst teach the hearts of thy faithful people, by the sending to them the light of thy Holy Spirit: Grant us by the same Spirit to have a right judgement in all things, and evermore to rejoice in his holy comfort; through the merits of Christ Jesus our Saviour, who liveth and reigneth with thee, in the unity of the same Spirit, one God, world without end. Amen. (BCP, p205)*

and:

*Almighty and everliving God, who fulfilled the promises of Easter by sending us your Holy Spirit and opening to every race and nation the way of life eternal, keep us in the unity of your Spirit, that every tongue may tell of your glory; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. (BAS, p345)*

The BCP's right judgement, holy comfort and unity are all good Godly, solid, sensible things worth praying for, but they don't reflect the amazed astonishment of Pentecost, or invoke the Breath of Heaven to fill and electrify the places in which we are sitting. Telling of glory in the

BAS version does at least hint at the event and wonder of Pentecost.

But do they really evoke

### *Pentecost*

and all the tongues, signs, wonders, miracles, prophetic encouraging, comforting and strengthening with the winds of the Holy Spirit of God whipping through your hair that came with it?

Admittedly, the BCP adds a supplementary Collect, which prays that we increase in the Holy Spirit daily, and there are a half-dozen references to being filled with the Holy Spirit or gifts of the Spirit, without specifying any of them, in the BAS. Just one in the BCP. None ask directly for or seem to expect that people, having been filled with the Holy Spirit, would speak in other tongues (Acts 2:4, 10:46) and prophesy (Acts 2:18,19:6) which are the two Manifestation Gifts to which Luke specifically refers in Acts.

There is, however, one Collect which lists three of the Manifestation Gifts in the Supplementary Collects: Of a Doctor of the Church, Poet, or Scholar:

*O GOD, who by thy Holy Spirit hast given unto one man a word of wisdom, and to another a word of knowledge, and to another the gift of tongues: We praise thy Name for the gifts of grace manifested in thy servant N., and we pray that thy Church may never be destitute of the same; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

But there really isn't any sense of even a slight breeze, let alone a mighty rushing wind. There is no invocation of the Spirit without measure from Jesus, no expectation of fire, boldness and excitement. These are not the prayers for someone hoping or expecting to be ignited by baptism in the Holy Spirit and fire.

It is possible that God might surprise us this time. After all, the disciples then didn't ask for it, either. But if we really want our Church to be revived and renewed, we need to pray so. We need more than restrained, sensible, safe prayers. Prayers for *ignition* are what we need this Pentecost. We need to be baptized in the Holy Spirit Jesus sends without measure, with fire and a mighty rushing wind.

So, having heard and prayed these prayers this Pentecost, don't stop there! Ask for more. Ask to be filled, to speak in other tongues, that The LORD will shake us up, for boldness, to be sent, for joy, to prophesy, to earnestly desire the higher spiritual gifts, for fire, and to never be destitute of the same. Ask for it all. I dare you!

Come, Holy Spirit, come!

*Gene Packwood blogs at GENERALities [www.kiwirev.blogspot.ca](http://www.kiwirev.blogspot.ca) and can be found on Facebook and Twitter (@kiwirev).*

# Discovering your Gifts

**Rev. Dr. Brett Cane**

Can God use me? How can I discover what God wants me to do? How do I know what my gifts are? I have nothing to offer God like other people do. I'm too young... too old... not good enough... to be used by God. Not true! God can use you and it has a lot to do with Spiritual Gifts.

What is a spiritual gift? Paul describes some in Romans 12: "We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us. If your gift is prophesying, then prophesy in accordance with your faith; if it is serving, then serve; if it is teaching, then teach; if it is to encourage, then give encouragement; if it is giving, then give generously; if it is to lead, do it diligently; if it is to show mercy, do it cheerfully" (6-8). There are other places in the Bible (1Cor 12, Eph 4, 1Pet 4) that list more gifts, such as speaking in tongues, healing and administration.

A spiritual gift is not just what we might think are the more "supernatural" things like prophecy and healing, but very down-to-earth things like showing mercy and encouragement and giving leadership. What makes it *spiritual* is that the Holy Spirit is the source of the gift. So I like to define a spiritual gift as a special attribute, natural or otherwise, endowed with power by the Holy Spirit for the working of God's purposes.

The Bible says that every Chris-

tian has at least one spiritual gift: "All these (gifts) are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he gives them to *each one*, just as he determines" (1Cor 11:11). That means that if you are a believer in Jesus you have at least one Spiritual gift to use for him to build up his church and make a difference in the world. If this is the case, then wouldn't you like to find out what your gifts are?

## Spiritual Gifts and God's Will

For many of us, a big question is: "How can I discover God's will for my life?" In Paul's letter to the Romans, chapter 12:1-2, he gives us this advice: "Offer your bodies as living sacrifices to God. Don't conform to the world's way of doing things. Let God transform your minds." Then, he says, you will know what God's will is; what he wants you to do.

What does it mean "to have our minds transformed"? Well, a lot of what we think about is ourselves. We need to get a right picture about ourselves before we can understand how God can use us. Paul says, "Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgement, in accordance with the measure of faith God has given you" (Rom 12:3).

Paul then goes on to talk about how each one of us is like a different part of the body. "For just as each of us has one body with many members, and these mem-

bers do not all have the same function, so in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. We have different gifts..." (Rom 12:4-6). Just as each part, say the eye or the hand, has a different function to make the body work, so God has given each of us a different spiritual gift to help his Body, the church, to function.

Why does Paul talk about gifts immediately after telling us to have our minds transformed, discover God's will and have a sober estimate of ourselves? Because, when we see what gifts and abilities God has given us, then we will know how to spend our time and where to concentrate our efforts. The "measure of faith" is the direction given by our spiritual gift. When we look at the gifts God has given us, that will take us a long way towards knowing God's will and direction for our lives.

Charles Swindoll told this story which will help us understand:

*A group of animals decided to improve their general welfare by starting a school. The curriculum included swimming, running, climbing and flying. The duck, an excellent swimmer, was deficient in other areas, so she majored in climbing, running and flying, much to the detriment of her swimming. The rabbit, a superior runner, was forced to*

*(Continued on page 12)*

## GIFTS, continued

*spend so much of his time in other classes that he soon lost much of his famed speed. The squirrel, who had been rated "A" as a climber, dropped to a "C" because her instructors spent hours trying to teach her to swim and fly. And the eagle, who was disciplined for soaring to the treetop, was told to learn how to climb up the trunk, even though flying was the most natural for him.*

God doesn't want you to concentrate your efforts in areas where he has not gifted you. So, knowing what spiritual gifts we have will help us know what he wants us to do. Here are three ways of going about this discovery.

### 1. Explore the Possibilities

Begin with prayer. Ask God for his wisdom and guidance in the whole process of discovery. Then acquaint yourself with the gifts by studying the relevant passages in Scripture and reading books on Spiritual Gifts.

Once you know what the gifts are, look at your own feelings. What do you like doing? If you enjoy helping people understand the truths of the Bible and helping people learn, you could have the gift of teaching. If having people over for a meal sends you into a tizzy, then you probably don't have the gift of hospitality.

I used to dislike using feelings as a guide in this way for fear that my motivation for doing something for God would be governed

too much by what it did for me. I then realized that as long as I was aware of how I felt and that my chief motivation was not what I got out of something, I could use my feelings as an indicator of where my gifts lay.

Completing a Spiritual Gifts Questionnaire can help you find out which ones you have. These "gift inventories" are not infallible, but they are a helpful indicator.

### 2. Be in Fellowship

Being in fellowship can bring confirmation of our gifts. It is important for us to share when we see people gifted in a certain way. How many of us have thought, "So-and-so has a real gift of wisdom. She is able to apply facts to a situation and come to intelligent decisions. I really listen when she speaks." Have you ever told "so-and-so"? She might not have any idea that she has the gift of wisdom. She needs to know this for her own encouragement and to enable her not to be shy in using her gift.

Having your gifts affirmed by others is not glorifying your self. When responding to a compliment about your gifts, do not say, "Oh, I couldn't possibly be any good at that, others would do much better." Say rather, "Thank you, I hadn't realized that is how God has been using me."

On the negative side, if nobody is benefiting through your efforts in a particular area, then perhaps that is not where your giftedness lies. Being in fellowship is essential to discovering what gifts you

do or do not have.

### 3. Put Yourself in a Position to be Used

Experiment! And don't give up on the first try. My first efforts at working with children were through teaching Sunday School. I was a dismal failure. My second attempt was through camp work. By a series of "spiritual coincidences," I found myself at a children's camp doing some talks. I adapted some things I had learned and there was an obvious impact upon the campers. This led to thirty years of youth ministry. I didn't know I had the gift until I was forced to experiment!

Experimenting can be frightening. Will I make a fool of myself? Will God let me down? God has a knack of putting us in situations where we will be stretched and we will have to depend on him totally, but he won't let us down.

Don't worry about making mistakes. God can fix mistakes. But, he can't do anything if you don't put yourself in a position to be used. Step out in faith!

Do you know what your gifts are? Discover them and then put them into practice, "So that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To him be the glory and power for ever and ever. Amen" (1Pet 4:11).

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# All Shook Up

*Jane Jones*

*At that time his voice shook the earth, but now He has promised, "Once more I will shake not only the earth but also the heavens." The words "once more" indicate the removing of what can be shaken – that is, created things – so that what cannot be shaken may remain. (Heb 12:26-27 NIV)*

What a time we are living in! It seems like all of a sudden we are seeing scripture come alive before our eyes, and it is not always comfortable! When God wants to deal with the idols in our lives, He will use whatever He can to bring that about. He often used Israel's enemies to bring them back into alignment with Him. What the enemy meant for evil, God is using for good so that we will become the church that is needed in these times.

There are strong parallels between the first Passover and this one. The Israelites were instructed to stay in their homes, apply the blood to the doorposts and lock their doors, to protect themselves from the angel of death. In the same way, we have been quarantined and separated from the world (Egypt). This is the first Passover since the first one where the Jews have been 'locked in.'

He is resetting us, giving us grace at this time to seek His face and

draw closer to Him. It is an abiding time under the shelter of His wings, so that we truly understand what living in communion with Him means. He wants to separate us from the ways of the world that fill our time, He wants to tear down our idols that we worship and take us back to the original intent, to worship Him in spirit and in truth.

In this time of quietness, I have



begun to see the things in myself that I have not dealt with in the busyness of life, and I don't always like what I see. These times bring out the best and the worst in us. This is our opportunity to cast out and cast off those things that hinder us and hold us back from walking in the fullness of all that the Lord has for us. I heard this quote: "A crisis is a terrible thing to waste." We can grow, change and reset our priorities.

My horizons have expanded, thanks to Zoom! Technology allowed me to join a meeting during

Passover where we celebrated communion together across the globe – what a blessing to share it with families from Israel. This is the walls coming down in the church – regardless of denomination we can share in the meal Jesus ordained for us. I have heard people say, "it is not the same unless we go through the ritual," but communion is between us and the Father. When He is present, we are in full communion.

I believe that right now we are on the threshing floor and that the Lord wants to remove the chaff from our lives, so if you are feeling tossed around and shaken, just submit to it. We are being prepared to reap a harvest of souls for the unshakeable Kingdom.

Let us not view this Pentecost as a religious ritual, but let us have an expectation that the Lord wants to again pour out His Spirit on all flesh, so that His power will fill us and flow out of us to those who need to know Him as Lord and Saviour. As we have emptied ourselves during this time of isolation, let us ask Him to fill us to overflowing with that power that can do infinitely more than we can ask or imagine!

What a privilege and honour to be born for such a time as this!

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## For the Common Good: Exploring I Corinthians, Part 12

*Rev. Canon Gene Packwood*

Now concerning spiritual gifts, sisters and brothers, St. Paul did not want the Corinthian Christians (or us) to be uninformed (1Cor12.1). Neither do I. How shall we inform ourselves? The previous eleven parts in this series have laid a foundation. It's Pentecost, so let's get down to it.

We begin, as always, and as it did in the first verses of 1 Corinthians, with Jesus. "I want you to understand," wrote St. Paul, "that no one speaking in the Spirit of God ever says 'Jesus is accursed!' and no one can say 'Jesus is Lord' except in the Holy Spirit" (1Cor 12:3). Jesus is preeminent. Jesus is always the point. Jesus is our focus. We receive and use our gifts to glorify Jesus, and for his sake. Whatever we do, in word or deed, is to be done in the name of the LORD Jesus, with thanksgiving (Col 3:17).

With this in mind, READ 1 CORINTHIANS 12.1-11

Notice first that there are varieties, or different kinds of gifts. The ones in this particular list are called the Manifestation Gifts. There are two other sets: the Motivational Gifts in Romans 12:6-8, and the Functional Ministry Gifts in Ephesians 4:11-13.

All gifts come from The One and the same God and Holy Spirit (v4) who empowers the varieties of service and activities that come with them in *everyone* (v6) because "To each is given the mani-

festation of the Spirit for the common good" (v7). In others words, *we all have 'em!*

Most of us don't have them all, but we will all have some, or at least one. We must have. *Everyone*, wrote St. Paul. *Each* of us. Apportioned "to each one individually as he wills" (v11). So we receive and are blessed by these gifts as individuals, but for the common good (v7). These are supernatural, God-given gifts, which are given and exercised within the Christian community to glorify Jesus and build up the Church (1Cor 14:12).

These are the Manifestation Gifts St. Paul says are empowered by God in everyone, given by and through the one and the same Spirit:

- The Word of Wisdom (v8): a revelation beyond natural human wisdom that enables a person to know what to do or say.
- The Word of Knowledge (v8): a revelation of information that you would not know by natural means for person, group or situation.
- Faith (v9): wonder-working faith that moves mountains, a knowing beyond doubt.
- Gifts of Healing (v9): various ways in which God manifests healing.
- Working of Miracles (v10): demonstrating God's power beyond natural laws or abilities of man.

- Prophecy (v10): speaking the word of the Lord to encourage, exhort and comfort the body (not seeing the future or fortune-telling).
- Discerning of Spirits (v10): perceiving what spirit is operating and whether it is of God or the devil.
- Various kinds of tongues (v10): a heavenly language given to a believer by the Holy Spirit for personal or corporate enlightenment (has interpretation).
- Interpretation of tongues (v10): understand the meaning when a message is given in tongues.

Here's my experience of one of those Gifts. In the mid 80s I was new (again) to the faith. I had a charismatic priest and some charismatic friends. It was probably one of them who told me about Dennis Bennett's book, Nine O'Clock in the Morning. I read it. Was mightily impressed. I finished it while traveling to Edmonton for work. When I got into my hotel room, I fell to my knees beside the bed and prayed earnestly for The LORD to give me some — especially tongues for some reason.

Nothing.

I prayed with gradually decreasing fervour for two years. Other people prayed over me.

Nothing.

*(Continued on page 15)*

I tried moving my lips and making noises.

Nothing.

Until one Wednesday evening in 1986 at a Holy Trinity, Calgary, prayer meeting, when a friend prayed (not for me in particular) that inhibitions would be removed. Suddenly, a fluent-sounding string of sounds came out of my mouth. There was no fire, or shaking, or emotional catharsis. It just started like it had been gently released in me. I didn't say anything to anybody. When I got home, I tried it again, and it was still there. It's still there today.

I pray with it most days. I don't know what The LORD does with these prayers he's given me, exactly what is achieved. I've never had somebody come up to me and say, "I didn't know you could speak Ukrainian!" or anything like that. I just know that he touched me and I've been blessed, and in some mysterious way his kingdom comes and grows through this heavenly language. Amazing. I am grateful. This gift is a reminder of God's wonder and goodness when doubts assail.

ARM Canada would like all of you to experience these blessings, too.

### FOR REFLECTION

- What are your feelings about manifestations of the

Spirit? How much do they repel or attract you?

- Describe an occasion when you heard someone pray, speak or sing in a tongue or deliver a word of prophecy. How did it feel?
- What has been your experience of the Gifts being exercised inappropriately?
- If you've never experienced these, or any other of the 1 Corinthians 12 Gifts in operation, why do you think that is?



- Which gift(s) would you like The LORD to give you? Which Gifts would you especially like to see operating in your Church?
- How might we provide the opportunity for such Gifts to be exercised in our congregations?
- What common good might arise out of these Gifts being encouraged and exercised in our gatherings?

### FOR PRAYER

- Pray through 1 Corinthians chapter 12:1-11, asking for it all, for everyone, as The LORD is willing to apportion it. We've got to *want* it. And if we don't, ask for God's gift of grace so we do.
- Once the COVID-19 all-clear is sounded, get together with like-minded folk, pray and lay hands on each other just as St. Paul did in Acts 19:1-7. In the meantime, pray together via phone or video.

• If you know people who have already experienced the infilling of the Holy Spirit, ask them to pray for you.

- Call or email ARM Canada to arrange for a team to come and visit (and for the financial support to get us there while you're at it, please! ☺). We'd love to help because Jesus is LORD!

*Gene Packwood blogs at GENERALities [www.kiwirev.blogspot.ca](http://www.kiwirev.blogspot.ca) and can be found on Facebook and Twitter (@kiwirev).*

Look for more of this series in upcoming issues of *Taste and See...*

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*To offer times of refreshing so God's people may be empowered by the Holy Spirit through teaching, equipping and fellowship in the love of Jesus. (Acts 3:19-21)*

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*Rediscovering the Holy Spirit's refreshing presence in our lives and in the church.*

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